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"HINDSIGHT"

By GEORGE MORGENSTERN

ON THE EIGHTH anniversary of the death of Franklin Roosevelt recently, the idolators held a double-headed memorial service, one group of the faithful attending at Hyde Park and another at Warm Springs. Mr. William D. Hassett, a former Presidential secretary, was charged with intoning the requiem at the Georgia rite. Like a late coming lodge brother stumbling over a familiar chair, Mr. Hassett found himself confronted by the embarrassing obstacles of the war-time conferences. He dealt with this impediment in a now familiar way. Referring to the criticism of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Truman for their generous accommodation of Stalin, Mr. Hassett said:

"Hindsight gives the armchair strategist a great advantage. . . . It is easy and idle to say that the Yalta and Potsdam agreements should not have been negotiated. After all — to keep the record straight — it must be remembered that it is the violation of those agreements by Stalin and his fellow barbarians which has brought the world to its present misery."

The "hindsight" thesis merits examination, for, lame as it is, it is the only justification that the New Dealers have been able to offer for the sorry world mess which is their only enduring bequest to the nation. The testimony of leaders of the war party at the Congressional investigation into Pearl Harbor is replete with references to "hindsight". Five New Deal secretaries of state — Hull, Stettinius, Byrnes, Marshall and Acheson — have had frequent resort to the term. It is standard in the lexicon of New Deal members of Congress and other apologists.

But this very refuge in the word "hindsight" is a confession that something went wrong — that, judged by the terminal result, decisions did not attain the intended end. "Hindsight" is the admission that the steersmen piloted the ship and themselves stern foremost.

Of course, the New Deal apologists, like old grads replaying an historic football game that was lost, want to start at the point where disaster overtook the home club in the fourth quarter. They ignore the fact that disasters are not sudden, but cumulative. They ignore the fact that there would have been no Tehran, no Yalta, no Potsdam, no cold war, no Korea if a war decision had not been taken some time between 1937 and 1941. They never discuss the fact that there would have been no war decision if there had not been a war psychosis in Roosevelt's White House circle.

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This psychosis had been appropriately described — no doubt through "hindsight" — by a distinguished American almost a century earlier. The war with Mexico had been in progress a year and eight months when, on January 12, 1848, Abraham Lincoln discussed President Polk's course in an address to the House of Representatives.

In the course of his speech, Lincoln charged that Polk "ordered General Taylor into the midst of a peaceful Mexican settlement, purposely to bring on a war; that originally having some strong motive — what I will not stop now to give my opinion concerning — to involve the two countries in a war, and trusting to escape scrutiny by fixing the public gaze upon the exceeding brightness of military glory — that attractive rainbow that rises in showers of blood — that serpent's eye that charms to destroy — he plunged into it, and has swept on and on, till, disappointed in his calculation of the ease with which Mexico might be subdued, he now finds himself he knows not where."

THOSE ACQUAINTED WITH THE methods by which American intervention was procured in World War II and in the Korean war, and with the results of these professed crusades which so sadly miscarried, may take note of certain prophetic terms in Lincoln's utterance.

Lincoln said that President Polk acted "purposely to bring on a war"; vide Roosevelt's undeclared war against Germany in the Atlantic, his economic strangulation and "tough" diplomacy in reference to Japan, his itch for an "overt act". Compare, also, Truman's resort to war in Korea without Constitutional decision by Congress and his flagrant violation of Public Law 264 in committing American forces to a United Nations military action.

Again, Lincoln referred to the President as "trusting to escape scrutiny by fixing the public gaze elsewhere"; vide the swamp tonic promises of the "four freedoms", the Atlantic charter, and the UN, as well as the unrestrained denunciation of the distant villain while the Constitution was being ravished in stage center.

Lincoln spoke also of the delusions of "military glory, a rainbow rising in blood, a serpent's eye charming to destroy"; vide the monstrous American casualties of World War II and Korea, the military victory without commensurate national advantage in the one and the failure even to attain military victory in the other, the mortgaging of the national future, the helping hand that raised Communist Russia in World War II to mastery over 850 million people and rendered the Soviet Union a menace to the continuance of civilization, the transformation of the United States into a military managerial state in the last 12 years.

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Finally, Lincoln said of the President's military adventure that "he now finds himself he knows not where". Where did Roosevelt find himself by the time he reached the Crimea? Truman by the time he came to Potsdam? Truman and Eisenhower when they were confronted by the ugly fact of Korea?

COMING DOWN TO 1940-41, when Roosevelt's decision for war was evident to even the blindest, there was no lack of warning that this intended adventure was subject to hazards far greater than those Roosevelt dreamed up to justify his determination. Those who want a compendium of sanity in those irrational days may refer to a curious propaganda exercise, entitled *The Illustrious Dunderheads,* edited by Rex Stout, one-time editor of the Communist *New Masses,* illustrated by the Communist William Gropper (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1942). This is a digest of the utterances and votes of anti-war members of Congress.

Elsewhere it may be discovered that distinguished churchmen were not wanting in ability to keep their heads amidst the mounting roar of organized war propaganda. Among the most sensible and outspoken were the late Cardinals Curley and O'Connell, Archbishop Beckman of Dubuque and the Rev. Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, then editor of the *Christian Century.*

The late Clifford S. Raymond of the *Chicago Tribune* displayed a discernment unmatched among his contemporaries. In an editorial of July 30, 1941, "If Russia Wins", he discussed the Hitler-Stalin war as a contest of two systems "created of fury and error". No one, the editorial warned, "should indulge in any dreamy speculation of the deliverance of Europe under the protection of the great liberal powers if Stalin is the controller of new forces dominating the continent. His perfidies equal Hitler's and his ruthlessness is not less. The Communist recognizes in Great Britain and the United States, two enemies, different in type from the Nazi foe, but fully as hostile and less akin to him in thought and purpose than his German neighbor. . . . The Red ally of today might be the Red terror of tomorrow."

By the time Truman enunciated his "containment" doctrine with reference to Greece and Turkey in 1947, this would have been considered an inspired analysis. In 1941 it was undoubtedly dismissed with the familiar lie that it was pro-Nazi propaganda. Yet many years later the British military expert, Maj. Gen. J. F. C. Fuller, would write:

"We Europeans are a truculent congeries of nations who have been fighting each other for upward of 2,000 years, and we dislike outside interference. In 1917 . . . . had you not stepped in, we should have been forced to come to terms between ourselves . . . . by a negotiated peace that could not have been worse than the one established. Again in the last war . . . . you got entangled in the European brawl . . . . But for lend-lease the war could not have continued for long. Again there would have been a negotiated peace, which could not have been as bad as the present so-called one."

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So we are back to "hindsight" once more. Roosevelt, bent on war, had the weapon of lend-lease. In June, 1941, Harry S. Truman cynically suggested that lend-lease be extended alternately to Germany and Russia, whichever side momentarily seemed to be failing, in order to keep them in their war until they had clawed each other into impotence. But having, by his lights, chosen to throw in his lot with Communism, Roosevelt could at least have driven a hard bargain in Stalin's days of desperation, eliciting the pledge there and then that Russia, when saved by lend-lease, would withdraw within her borders.

It is the hindsight fashion to say nowadays that no Soviet undertaking is worth the paper on which it is written, but a promise exacted in writing at this early stage, when America had at least the fiction of nonbelligerency as an earnest of her disinterested position, would surely have been of greater moral value than the contention at a much later date that Russia had "violated" the sorry dispositions made at Yalta. But General Deane, the American military attache in Moscow, was astonished at how Harry Hopkins and Averell Harriman fell all over themselves to promise Stalin unlimited military assistance with no strings attached.

There was yet another chance to catch the bus, and that was to have accepted the struggling Japanese in their offer of peace even before Roosevelt went to Yalta. It is reported on good authority that Roosevelt, two days before he left for the Crimea, was in possession of a report from General MacArthur that Japan would surrender on virtually the identical terms which ended the war six months later. Had that happened, a nationalist China, friendly and allied with the United States, would have been left intact, relieved of the vitiating sacrifices squeezed from her without her knowledge by Roosevelt at Yalta in return for unnecessary Soviet participation during the last six days of a war that lasted 1,347.

Passing over all of these possibilities, which were muffed by stupidity or design, the fact remains that it was never necessary for an American President to have made the calamitous series of concessions, beginning with Tehran, which fused the bomb of Red world menace.

No statesman with a sense of duty to his own country voluntarily "gambles" from a position of paramount strength. Roosevelt had every predominant resource of power at his command then and soon was to have the ultimate weapon of that day — the atomic bomb. He cast aside every convincer he possessed and dealt his adversary five aces. He discarded the Atlantic charter in principle and in detail, and, with it, any vestige of moral purpose supposed to justify his war. Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad. Roosevelt's legacy to his countrymen was a desperate and insane world. If America goes under, it will not take "hindsight" to explain why it happened.

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HUMAN EVENTS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor* FRANK CHODOROV, *Associate Editor*

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Korea: The cessation of blood-letting, even if it proves but temporary, is the necessary balm to ease the pain of what constitutes at least a humiliating stalemate, if not defeat. The armistice agreement is called a compromise but it looks to observers here as if our side did all the compromising and the enemy none at all. The latter is permitted to build up air fields and our air force is not allowed to fly over enemy territory to spot hostile developments, etc. Finally, we have submitted to the farcical naming of Communist Poland and Communist Czechoslovakia as "neutral" nations to police the truce terms in South Korea. Many here in the Capital find it difficult to believe that these were the best terms obtainable and think that, under Churchillian pressure, we yielded many things which the Kremlin, now weakened by internal troubles, would have conceded.

Not only is the truce "uneasy" but prophets warn of worse to come. Senator Douglas, Democrat, of Illinois, believes that Red China's admission to the United Nations may be the "implicit" terms behind the whole armistice — which is a nice way of describing "secret diplomacy". Douglas is opposed to such admission. He thinks that already the U.S. and Britain have worked out a way to put Red China in the UN Council. If that should happen, Red China will have proved that a nation can shoot its way successfully into the body designed to keep the peace.

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There is another worry, rarely mentioned even in off-the-record briefings, but sufficient to spoil much sleep. The truce may have unfortunate repercussions on the Eastern European situation. Diplomats here who know the satellite countries say that people there will see clearly the appeasement nature of the truce and consequently rebellious spirits who have recently caused so much trouble for the Soviet rulers will thereby be materially discouraged.

However that may be, the tone of reaction to the truce here in the Capital is decidedly negative. Mr. David Lawrence, one of the most respected of veteran columnists, and a conservative, goes so far as to write flatly: "Politically, the Korean truce will plague Dwight Eisenhower for the remainder of his term." And Charles Lucey, of the Scripps-Howard chain, wires from the Midwest his analysis of popular reaction: "There is deep foreboding, skepticism and mistrust in much of America." This is not an auspicious beginning on which to build a peace.

Politics: As GOP members of Congress prepare to go home to their constituencies, there's a lot of talk which would prove surprising to those who read naught but pious "party harmony" releases from the GOP National Committee. There are frequent, candid references to a split in the Republican Party and no little speculation as to how long the "truce" between the conservative wing and the "liberal" easterners can last. One prominent GOP Congressman whose party ancestry virtually dates from 1856, talked to us calmly and hopefully of a split and "realignment" with Democratic conservatives. He claimed 30 such Democratic kinsmen in the House who — he said — were willing and anxious.

There's at least one Midwest constituency, according to its GOP representative, in which it is popular to oppose Ike's legislative program. The incumbent seems unworried by the elections of next year. He has just made a survey, he says, of his district and that of the neighboring constituency. The latter is represented by a GOP Congressman who has gone "down the line" for the President's program *in toto*. Our friend says his neighbor is losing support by upholding Ike's program; while he himself is gaining popularity by his opposition to such Eisenhower "musts" as foreign aid.

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Midwesterners often mention the "revolt" of the Wisconsin State GOP convention recently against its senior Senator Wiley on the score of the latter's opposition to the Bricker Amendment. That affair drew much comment, and we are assured that the rebellious elements voiced the feelings not only of Wisconsin "grassroots", but also of areas in adjoining states.

This discontent is compounded of dislike of the Administration foreign policy, one-worldism, retention of many Democrats and New Dealers in Federal jobs (rather than desire to fill these places with Republicans), continuing high taxes, foreign aid appropriations and of course Korea. It will be interesting to see whether the Korea truce will alter significantly this developing anti-Administration trend.

Not Merely Gossip: Legends of the sage remarks of Syngman Rhee have been going the rounds in the State and Defense Departments among people who "knew him when". One concerns General Hodge, first commander in Korea after the last war. Hodge, an old army fire-eater, had the unpleasant duty of trying to sell Rhee on the same policy which, at about the same time, General Marshall and the State Department were forcing on Chiang Kai-shek in China — that is, to create a coalition government containing Communists. Hodge and Rhee argued interminably, until finally Rhee had the last word with: "General, you can't make a coalition with small pox."

● The one division of the State Department really trying to "clean out" has been the Bureau of Security, under former FBI man Scott McLeod. But McLeod and his aides have scored only occasional successes and have been blocked by Undersecretary "Beedle" Smith and the old Acheson crew. McLeod has been backed and defended by prominent members of the Majority on Capitol Hill. But what will happen when these friends in Congress go home soon to their constituencies, on vacation? Word has gone round that, when Congress adjourns, the Acheson-Truman holdovers will unmask their guns and try to oust McLeod from his office. As usual, the Acheson network has its same old friends operating in the press. Watch for the preliminary rumbles as soon as Capitol Hill takes its vacation.

● The absence of Senator Taft is a painful but increasingly persistent topic in the Republican cloakrooms. Legislators keenly miss the Ohioan's knowledge and ability — not only in parliamentary procedures, but also in depth and sweep of understanding of public questions. Many who used to criticize Taft and carp at him behind his back now take an attitude of "what on earth would we do without him?" There's absolutely no one else able or willing to try to fill his place.

Majority Leader Knowland, after two months of work, now seems pretty green and "young". But it is not only a parliamentary or party problem. There has begun to grow the impression that, even though Taft plans on coming back in January, an unhealthy vacuum will exist in the meantime. For the Ohio Senator eloquently and astutely voiced the ideas and attitude of a large part of the nation — roughly from the Rockies to the Appalachian Mountains, in short, the Middle West. No one has appeared able or inclined to do the same.

State Department Story: When campaign oratory last fall featured the promise to "clean out" the State Department, voters for Eisenhower undoubtedly assumed that some substantial progress would be made by the summer of 1953. For some months now, members of Congress have been uttering complaints that they have been able to discern very little progress in purging the State Department, and prospects for a real clean-out seemed slim. Several months ago, Congressman Busbey (R., Ill.) made a widely noticed speech along this line. One of his observations was typical of Capitol Hill, saying something like this: "Whenever we have business to transact with the State Department, we see precisely the same old faces as under Dean Acheson."

While some heads have rolled, most changes have been only among the top-level hierarchy. Thus, Mr. Carlisle Humelsine, Director of Security, is out, succeeded by Mr. Scott McLeod who is very popular with members of Congress. In the Division of Public Affairs, an Acheson favorite, Mr. Howland Sargeant (husband of Myrna Loy, the movie actress) has been succeeded by Mr. Carl McCardle of the Phila-

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delphia *Evening Bulletin.* But does that mean that Sargeant has shaken the dust of Washington from his feet? Not at all. We learn that he is staying on as a "consultant" at the salary of $11,800 a year — a cut below his salary as head of the Division of Public Affairs, which was $15,000 a year. However, he hasn't really suffered, for we learn further that the laws and regulations in effect on January 30 permitted Mr. Sargeant a lump sum leave payment of about $5,000.

Down below such altitudes as nourished Mr. Sargeant are the ranks of the "middle bureaucracy" which — we never tire of repeating — really run the show. Thus, comparing the Department of State classified telephone directory, dated July, 1953, with that dated November, 1952, we find 5 subdivisions under Mr. Dulles and his special assistants in the Office of the Secretary. There are 14 chief functionaries listed for these five divisions. Exactly 14 of these were in the State Department directory of last November, and 10 were in their very same jobs.

Likewise, in the case of the Assistant Secretariat of Administration, all the present names were prominent in last November's directory of the Acheson hierarchy; same for the Foreign Building Operations, the Division of Foreign Reporting, the Office of Budget and Reports (with one exception), the Office of Finance, Office of Operating Facilities, Division of Communications and Records, Division of Central Services, etc., etc. All, with only minor changes, mirror the old setup under Acheson.

When we turn to the roster of the chiefs of the International Information section, we discover why Senator McCarthy worked up such a rage with this section last week. For example, the nine chiefs of the USIIA Office of Policy and Plans are name for name identical with those in November, 1952. Leafing onward, through Intelligence, UN Affairs, Economic Affairs, geographical sections, etc. — almost identical without change during the passage of 8 months; but when a name is missing, it is noted further down under some other division or section.

Book Note: Whittaker Chambers' *Witness,* first issued in America and successfully, a year ago, has just appeared in an English edition, minus about one-fifth of its American bulk. Rebecca West gives it a favorable review in the *Sunday Times* (July 19), with some pithy observations: "Wars and the Welfare State have made Europe into America so far as middle-class intellectuals are concerned. Now that none but the rich can save enough to leave their children in positions so secure that their comfort and enjoyment of social prestige can be guaranteed, the younger generation must find an allure in the prospect of joining a secret society offering them membership in a world-wide organization of many advantages over the next man in getting a job, while enabling them to pretend that they are accepting these benefits for the sake of the needy proletariat.

"This explains why the Communist Party had so many middle-class recruits in the twenties and thirties, and it explains an odder phenomenon, the fierce campaign waged by many intellectuals who are not Communist, against anybody who exposes Communst activity. Of this the persecution of Whittaker Chambers is a horrifying example; and his book might well be called, 'Intimidation of a Witness'. . . . But many groups have still an aching sense that Communism might have been a way out for the stranded bourgeoisie, that it might have offered jobs for the boys with haloes thrown in, and that maybe if indiscreet people would keep silent about the real nature of Communism a packaged Eden might yet be dispensed from under the Red counter."

For Educators: Just off the press is the report of the Subcommittee for Internal Security (Senator Wm. E. Jenner, Chairman), entitled *Subversive Influence in the Educational Process.* It would hardly do to try to summarize the booklet in the space at our disposal, for it is itself a condensation of the result of months of hard labor. Every educator owes it to himself and his profession to read this report. It will go a long way toward eradicating the false impression as to the committee's work that the left-wing press has tried to create. (Address: Senator William E. Jenner, Chairman, Subcommittee on Internal Security, Senate Office Building, Washington 25, D. C.)

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Das Spiel um Deutschland, by Fritz Hesse. Munich. Paul List. Reviewed by F. A. Voigt.

That the "superior" Germanic race must save the world from the "inferior" Jewish, was, to Hitler, not only true, but the all-embracing truth. He believed war to be the supreme test of this "truth".

He regarded the English as "Germanic" and he wanted the world to be shared equally between the British Empire and the future German Empire.

When he came to deal with English politicians, especially with Mr. Chamberlain, he lost his faith in England. He was convinced that her policy was evasion, weakness and bluff. But when she honored her pledge to Poland, he was thrown into a state of panic — and revised his opinion of England.

His expert on English affairs was Fritz Hesse, the author of the book under review. Hesse was head of two German news agencies in London before the war. He was, and still is, a patriotic German, a conservative and a man of integrity and critical judgment. When he returned to Germany after the outbreak of the war, he became Hitler's expert on English affairs. Every document, memorandum and report relating to Anglo-German relations came to his knowledge. He was on terms of intimacy with Ribbentropp and knew many of the German leaders, including Hitler, personally.

Hitler, he tells us, did not lose hope of peace with England until he lost all hope. He wanted the Polish war to remain a local war. When he was defeating France he still cherished the great hope of his life. He believed that once France had fallen, England would come to terms. According to Hesse, he deliberately allowed the British expeditionary force to escape from Dunkirk without molestation. Except for a raid on the London docks he made no heavy attack on England in 1940, in fact, he never threw the whole weight of the German air force against her until it was too late.

He did not believe in the invasion of England. Incredible as it may appear, the preparations for invading England were made without his consent (they were, in any case, quite inadequate). Hitler was not interested in the African campaign until it was too late. He never wanted Italy to enter the war (he was furious with Mussolini for attacking Greece). He had always meant to invade Russia, overthrow the Communist despotism and colonize the Ukraine. When his armies were advancing on Moscow and Leningrad, and victory seemed within his reach, he was still resolved on peace with England — not her destruction. With Russia overthrown, he would, so he believed, be strong enough to make her see reason (or what he thought was reason). He was even willing to leave her in possession of the former German colonies (with the Ukraine in his possession, he would not need African territory).

In no case would Hitler make peace with Russia. Even after the Battle of Stalingrad, when Stalin, according to Hesse, made discreet overtures (through the intermediary of the Japanese), Hitler persisted in his refusal.

When he began to realize that defeat was irretrievable, he grew desperate, not just because he was losing a war, but because the result was disproving the "truth" for which he had lived and fought. The English remained unconvinced of the great German mission; the Germans were shown to be "inferior" by the infallible test of war. For Hitler there was no truth left and life had lost its meaning. So he abandoned himself to the final frenzy of destruction. He did not care if Germany perished, for she did not deserve survival. When he could destroy no more, he destroyed himself.

This, in brief, is what Hesse tells us in one of the most important books that has been written about the Second World War.

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